

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending with claim 17 being added.

Applicants acknowledge that claims 7, 13, 14, 15 and 16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten these claims into independent form. Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims should be indicated as allowed in the next paper from the office.

Claims 1-6 and 8-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,432,585 (Kawakami). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

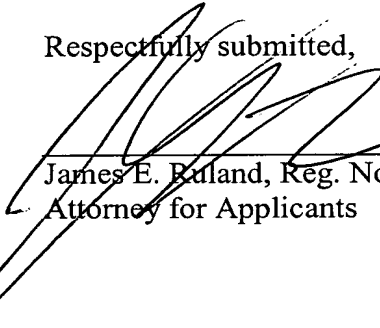
Kawakami discloses a positive electrode including an electrode material layer surrounding an anode (a positive electrode) to prevent dendritic growth from causing internal-shorts between the anode and cathode (see col. 7, lns. 50 and 60-67; Examples 1-12 at col. 35-39; and col. 67, ln. 48-col. 68, ln. 8). The electrode materials include tin particles which may be coated (col. 19, ln. 50-col. 20, ln. 22; Examples 10 and 11 at col. 38; Examples 22 and 23 at cols. 43-44; Table 4 at col. 67-70; and Fig. 13). However, the examiner has failed to establish that the tin particles in the electrode materials of the reference correspond to or act in the same manner as the active metal cores of the present invention. In addition, the reference fails to teach or suggest a coating of a coated metal core is a metal hydroxide or a metal oxyhydroxide which has been converted into its oxide (relevant to claim 3). Consequently, Applicants respectfully submit that this reference cannot anticipate the claimed invention.

In view of the above remarks, favorable reconsideration is courteously requested. Attached is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned, "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

If there are any remaining issues which can be expedited by a telephone conference, the Examiner is courteously invited to telephone counsel at the number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,



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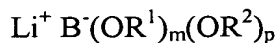
Attorney Docket No.: MERCK-2219

Date: March 3, 2003

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Amended) A positive-electrode material comprising a an active coated metal core of Sb, Bi, Cd, In, Pb, Ga, tin, or an alloy thereof.
7. (Amended) A process for the production of the positive-electrode material ~~according to Claim 1,~~ comprising a coated metal core of Sb, Bi, Cd, In, Pb, Ga, tin, or an alloy thereof, comprising
 - a) preparing a suspension or sol of the metal or alloy core in urotropin;
 - b) emulsifying the suspension with at least one C₅-C₁₂-hydrocarbon;
 - c) precipitating the emulsion onto the metal or alloy core; and
 - d) converting a metal hydroxide or an oxyhydroxide into the corresponding oxide by heating the system.
13. (Amended) A process for the production of the positive-electrode material ~~according to Claim 1,~~ comprising a coated metal core of Sb, Bi, Cd, In, Pb, Ga, tin, or an alloy thereof, comprising preparing a suspension or sol of the metal or alloy core in urotropin.
14. (Amended) An electrochemical cell ~~according to Claim 8,~~ comprising a negative electrode, a positive electrode, a separator and an electrolyte, wherein the positive electrode comprises a positive-electrode material comprising a coated metal core of Sb, Bi, Cd, In, Pb, Ga, tin, or an alloy thereof, wherein the negative electrode comprises an alkali metal borate of the formula:



wherein

m and p are 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4, where $m + p = 4$, and

R^1 and R^2 are, independently, identical or different,

are optionally bonded directly to one another via a single or double bond,

are each, individually or together, an aromatic or aliphatic carboxylic, dicarboxylic or sulfonic acid radical, or

are each, individually or together, an aromatic ring of a phenyl, naphthyl, anthracenyl or phenanthrenyl group, which may be unsubstituted or mono- to tetrasubstituted by A or Hal, or

are each, individually or together, a heterocyclic aromatic ring of a pyridyl, pyrazyl or bipyridyl group, which may be unsubstituted or mono- to trisubstituted by A or Hal, or

are each, individually or together, an aromatic hydroxy acid of an aromatic hydroxycarboxylic acid or an aromatic hydroxysulfonic acid group, which may be unsubstituted or mono- to tetrasubstituted by A or Hal,

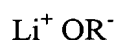
and

Hal is F, Cl or Br

and

A is alkyl having 1 to 6 carbon atoms, which may be mono- to trihalogenated.

15. (Amended) An electrochemical cell ~~according to Claim 8~~, comprising a negative electrode, a positive electrode, a separator and an electrolyte, wherein the positive electrode comprises a positive-electrode material comprising a coated metal core of Sb, Bi, Cd, In, Pb, Ga, tin, or an alloy thereof, wherein the negative electrode comprises an alkali metal alkoxide of the formula:



in which R

is an aromatic or aliphatic carboxylic, dicarboxylic or sulfonic acid radical, or

is an aromatic ring of a phenyl, naphthyl, anthracenyl or phenanthrenyl group, which may be unsubstituted or mono- to tetrasubstituted by A or Hal, or

is a heterocyclic aromatic ring of a pyridyl, pyrazyl or bipyridyl group, which may be unsubstituted or mono- to trisubstituted by A or Hal, or

is an aromatic hydroxy acid of an aromatic hydroxycarboxylic acid of aromatic hydroxysulfonic acid group, which may be unsubstituted or mono- to tetrasubstituted by A or Hal,

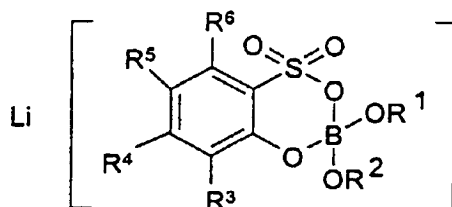
and

Hal is F, Cl or Br

and

A is alkyl having 1 to 6 carbon atoms, which may be mono- to trihalogenated.

16. (Amended) An electrochemical cell ~~according to Claim 8, comprising a negative electrode, a positive electrode, a separator and an electrolyte, wherein the positive electrode comprises a positive-electrode material comprising a coated metal core of Sb, Bi, Cd, In, Pb, Ga, tin, or an alloy thereof,~~ wherein the negative electrode comprises a lithium salt of formula:



wherein

R¹ and R² are, independently, identical or different, are optionally bonded directly to one another via a single or double bond, and are each, individually or together, an aromatic ring of a phenyl, naphthyl, anthracenyl or phenanthrenyl group, which may be unsubstituted or mono- to hexasubstituted by an alkyl group, an alkoxy group or halogen.